

## **Development Impact of Sex and Transcendental Meditation Strategies on Mental Health**

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### **Abstract**

*The aim of this study was to find out the impact of age, sex and meditational strategies on positive and negative mental health. It was proposed that –*

- i. Variation in age would cause variation on positive and negative mental health.*
- ii. Boys and girls would differ in the magnitude of positive and negative mental health.*
- iii. T.M. and non T.M. would be found different in relation to their scores on positive and negative mental health.*

*One hundred Sixty students of a undergraduate and post graduate classes served as participants and they were arranged according to the requirement of 2x2x2 factorial design with 2 levels of grade (undergraduate/post graduate), 2 type of sex (boys/girls) and 2 types of mediator (mediator/non-mediator) well being scale and emotional disturbance scales were used to find out the pattern of positive and negative health. All hypotheses were confirmed*

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## **Introduction**

*“Through Transcendental Meditation, the human being can experience that level of intelligence which is an ocean of all knowledge, energy, intelligence and bliss.” – Maharishi*

In recent years the relative efficiency of mind body relations has highly been established. It has been opined in ancient and modern Indian as well as in existing west that physical soundness improves the cognitive competence. The names of media also advocate its significance and they claim that yogic processes do help and foster mental health. At one side of the coin they modify cognitive competence and on the other hand they improve mental health. In this study an attempt will be made to find out the pattern of positive and negative mental health as affected by yogic exercises in controlled and in natural setting. The delineations of concepts are as follows: -

### **Concept of well-being**

A good life involves engagement, satisfaction and purpose. According to new model, concept of well being refers to health, vitality creativity, fulfillment and resilience. It refers to thriving and flourishing that involves the development of mind, body, society and environment in general. Well being refers to a harmonious interplay of cognitive and affective processes rather than subjugating to them. In terms of Indian terminology it refers to harmony of Indriyas, Chitta and Atma.

Pleasure relates to one aspect of well being Sukah. As is called in sanskrit refers to ‘Agreeable feelings’ based on mind self, sense organ object and perception. According to Indian perspective of well being is ‘preys’ while the Eudemonic perspective refers to ‘Shreyas’ true happiness lies in expression of virtue.

The question that logically follows from the above two perspectives is whether pursuit of a goal and the resultant success per se does not ensure happiness. On the other hand a general, happy disposition leads to success.

Exploring into the cause of unhappiness it may be seen that negative social compression, inequitable reaction to equal losses and gain are some of the main causes.

When the reason for unhappiness is identified, how do we mitigate them to reach will being? What are the identified challenges the well being?

Among the many, following are the few challenges:

Imbalance of work and leisure

Life style related problem

The very approach of measuring development in terms of consumption

Competition, promoting individualism and egoism  
Technology generated problems  
Modern medicine and health related intervention and  
Lack of health related support system.

The mainstream psychology identifies four dimension of well being-via

Evolutionary  
Affective  
Motivational  
Developmental

The Indian perspective identifies four aspects, viz. five elements, the person or jeeva, the life or Ayu and the health or Arogya. Well being as per Indian perspective relates to well being on physical, psychological and spiritual planes. The Indian approach to well being refers to Maitri, Karuna, Mudita and Upeksha meaning Relatedness, compassion, pleasant disposition and avoidance of conflict. In other words, well being refers to uniting self with self by negating the ego. This in turn indicates that well being is a combination of survival, well being, freedom and identify.

#### **Yoga and Health:**

It is common to refer to the first four steps inclusively as Hatha yoga and the last four which focus more directly on mental realm as 'Raja Yoga' (*Rama, Bellentina and Ajaya, 1993*). Hatha yoga is inseparable from Raja yoga. Raja yoga begins when *Hatha yoga* ends. *Hatha yoga* prepares a person to take up Raja yoga. Hatha yoga relates to the restraint of breath, *Asana, Bandhas, and Mudras*. It aims at psycho physiological balance while Raja yoga brings predominantly, the thought system, i.e. attaining objective perception of reality or liberation from falsehood or 'Avidya'.

Prana is described in the sacred texts of yoga and Vedanta as having five modifications, according to its five different functions. These are Prana, Apana Samana, Udana and Vyana, swallowing of food, helping in sleep; of apana, circulation of blood. The seat of Prana is the heart; of Apana, the organs of evacuation: of Samana, the area of naval; of Udana, the throat; while Vyana is all pervading and moves throughout the body, guarding it against disease and maintaining equilibrium.

Yoga helps to reduce stress through various techniques. With a better control over mind one feels that the world is, after all, not that uncongenial a place to live in. Relaxation through **meditations, Asanas and Pranayama** is very effective in reducing stress that reduces the defense mechanism of the body. The regular practice of *Asanas and Pranayama* strengthens the nervous system and helps people deal

with stress more effectively by reducing the steroid hormones, uric acid, free fatty acids and cholesterol etc.

**Goleman (1973)** compared 30 mediators and 30 non mediators in an anxiety arousing situation and found that those who were experienced mediators, responded to threat with less subjective anxiety. **Schwartz (1973)** on the basis of a comparison between 38 mediators, 50 about to begin meditation and 39 non mediators, found that the mediators reported a general increase in positive mood states, being less stressed and leading a more regular life style that the typical American. **Kocher (1972)** reported a significant reduction in anxiety level. And general hostility an group of forty yoga performers. **Udupa (1985)** reported to have treated 1007 cases of various stress disorders with a combination of the practice of **Asana, Pranayama, and meditation**. **Granath, et. Al. (2006)** showed that concluded on the basis of a 4 months systematic cognitive behavior therapy on one groups and the **Kundalini yoga** program on the other group that both cognitive behavior therapy and yoga are promising stress management techniques. The findings of **Michalsen. Et. Al. 92005** showed that compared with the control group, yoga group showed significant reduction group also showed significant increase in well being. **Kirkwood, el. al. (2005)** reviewed a number of studies on yoga. It was reported that in several studies, which compared yoga with anti-anxiety medication, greater improvements were found yoga than medication.

Researchers have also reported positive results of yoga one cardiovascular endurance (**Bera & Rajapurkar, 1993; Ganguli, 1981; Gharote 1973, 1976. Lolage and Bera(2002)** too found that **Pranayamas** were useful in improving cardiovascular endurance of **Kho-Kho** players as measured by & minutes run test and 1600 M run test.

Prasad, et. al. (2005) found that men (N=41) showed reduced levels of serum triglycerides and VLDL cholesterol at the end of 30 day practice of Pranayama, and increased levels of HDL cholesterol and reduced levels of free fatty acids at the end of both 30 days as well as 3 months session of Pranayama and Asana together. Women (N=23) showed reduced levels of free fatty acids at the end of both 30 days as well as 3 months sessions, and also showed reduced levels of total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL and VLDL cholesterol by the end of 3 months session.

Mamtani and Mamtani (2005) on the basis of a review of research on the use of Ayurvedic treatments (including yoga practice) concluded that there is sufficient evidence to support the use of yoga in treating heart disease and hypertension. Patel (1973, 1975) too reported that biofeedback training when combined with yogic

relaxation had lasting effects in lowering blood pressure; Improvement was sustained twelve months after training had been complete. The asana practices (Surya Namaskar, Trikon Asana, Aad Asana, Pawanmukta Asana etc.) and Bhastrika Pranayam have been reported to be effective in lowering the blood glucose levels of insulin dependent diabetics (fasting as well as post prandial) (Malthotra, et. al., 2005).

Yoga stresses on adopting a life style based on proper behaviors including Yama (restraints) and Niyama (discipline). This would make the person more self efficacious to follow the desired routine. The practice of yoga as documented above, keeps us away from many ailments. It enhances resistance, tolerance and will power. Yoga acts as an antioxidant counteracting many ill effects of various environmental hazards like bacterial infections. It keeps a balance between vat (wind) pit (bile) and kaf (phlegm) in our body. Regular practice of Surya Namaskar, having twelve postures activates the seven charaks (Muladhar, Swadhisthan, Manipur, Anhat, Vishudhi, Jnan and Shasrar), the energy centres, which when activated, maintain the tone of the nervous system. Other Asans like Bhujang, Shulabh, Makar, Shav etc. are as effective. Pranayama (Comprising Poorak, Kumbhak, and Recheck) results in inhaling more oxygen and consuming less energy. It has been found to have beneficial effects on heart and lungs and an increase in longevity.

Considering the different aspects of yoga, one can conclude that yoga is a live art that promotes a long healthy life. However, the ultimate goal of yoga is not just to achieve and maintain good health only. Health well being should be considered as only supportive of the internal practices of yoga viz., concentration, mediation, and Samadhi. Meditation endows a person with increased capacity of the mind by releasing its dormant power. By participating in the peace and serenity of the soul, the mind becomes rejuvenated and strengthened and regains its lost vigor, resulting in increased capacity for tolerating the frustration of life. The ultimate goal of yoga is self realization. By realizing the true self (dredging through the five sheaths, i.e. Koshaas), an embodiment of bliss free from the taint of sin and fear of death, a mortal individual attains the highest fulfillment (Adsiwarananda, 2004).

### **Study – 1**

#### **Development Impact of Sex and T.M. strategies on emotional disturbance**

In this study an attempt was made to found out. The impact of age, sex and T.M. Strategies on emotional disturbance. It was contended that :

1. Variation in age would cause variations on emotional disturbance.
2. Boys and Girls would differ in the magnitude of emotional disturbance.

3. T.M. and non T.M. would be found different in relation to their scores on emotional disturbance.

Keeping these hypotheses in consideration the study was planned:

### **Method**

**Sample:** One hundred sixty students of undergraduate and post graduate classes served as participants and they were arranged according to the requirements of 2x2x2 factorial design with two levels of grade (undergraduate and post graduate), two sex (Boys and Girls) and two types of mediators (Mediators and Non mediators).

**Measure:** In this study only one test was used. It is described below:

Emotional Disturbance Scale: There are 10 domains of emotional disturbance in this scale namely

- Withdrawal from the society.
- Isolation.
- Rejection
- Day Dreaming
- Guilt Feeling
- Inferiority complex
- Conflict
- Low confidence
- Nervousness
- Anxiety

Scores range between 90-450. Low scores indicate low emotional disturbance and high scores vice-versa.

### **Results**

Obtained data were analyzed by analysis of variance and interpreted in terms of age, sex and meditational strategies on emotional disturbance.

It was found that the main effect of grade was significant ( $F_{2, 144}=6.60$   $p<.01$ ). It was found that emotional disturbance was higher in undergraduate ( $x=280.00$ ) as compared to postgraduate ( $x=320.00$ ). The next main effect sex was also ( $F_{1, 144}=7.60$   $p<.01$ ). It was noticed that girls were lower in emotional disturbance ( $x=318.60$ ) than boys ( $x=339.19$ ). The next main effect of types of meditational strategies was also significant ( $F_{1, 144}=5.16$   $p<.01$ ). It was found that higher level of emotional disturbance was shared by non meditators ( $f=326.16$ ) than non meditators ( $x=289.19$ ). The two way interaction of grade x sex were significant ( $F_{2, 144}= \dots\dots$ ). The next two way interaction of grade x types of meditational strategies

was also significant ( $F_{2, 144}=6.60$   $p<.01$ )

It was found that both interactions were very high. The sex x types of meditational strategies interaction was also significant ( $F_{1, 144}=7.79$   $p<.01$ ).

All these way interaction of grade x sex x types of meditational strategies was also significant ( $F_{4, 144}=10.04$   $p<.01$ ). It showed that all variable laid their impact on emotional disturbance.

## **Study 2**

Developmental Impact of sex and T.M. strategies on well-beings

In this study an attempt was made to find out the Impact of age, sex and T.M. strategies on well-being. It was contended that.

1. Variation in age would cause variation on well being.
2. Boys and Girls would differ in the magnitude of well being.
3. T.M. and Non T.M. would be found different in relation to their scores on well being.

Keeping these hypotheses is considerations the study was planned:

### **Method**

**Sample:** One hundred sixty students of a undergraduate and post graduate classes served as participates and they were arranged according to the requirements of 2x2x2 factorial design with two levels of grade (undergraduate and post graduate), two sex (Boys and Girls) and two types of meditators (T.M. and Non T.M.).

**Measure:** In this study only one test well being scale (Verma and Chaddha) was used. It consists of 20 Yes/No type questions. Scores ranges between 0-20. Low scores indicates high well-beings and high scores vice-versa.

### **Result**

Obtained data were analyzed by analysis of variance and interpreted in terms of age, sex and meditational strategies on well-being. Findings are presented in table -2.

It was found that the main effect of grade was significant ( $F_{1, 144}=5.96$   $p<.01$ ). It was found that well being was higher in post graduate ( $x=15.19$ ), as compared to undergraduate ( $x=11.16$ ). The next main effect of sex was also significant ( $F_{1, 144}=5.19$   $p<.01$ ). It was noticed that girls were higher in well-beings ( $x=15.19$ ) than boys ( $x=12.64$ ).

The next main effect of types of meditational strategies was also significant ( $F_{1, 144}=8.16$   $p<.01$ ). It was found that higher level of well being was shared by meditators ( $x=16.62$ ) than non meditators ( $x=10.60$ ).

The two way interaction of grade x sex were significant ( $F_{2, 144}=6.60$   $p<.01$ ). The next two way interaction of grade x type of meditational strategies was also significant ( $F_{2, 144}=6.19$   $p<.01$ ). It was found that both interactions were very high. The sex x types of meditational strategies interaction was also significant. ( $F_{1, 144}=7.68$   $p<.01$ ).

All these way interaction of grade x sex x type of meditational strategies was also significant. ( $F_{4, 144}=10.68$   $p<.01$ ). It showed that all variables laid their impact of well being.

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